

WAVE JOINT TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION DISTRICT PLAN

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PROPOSAL

WESTERN ARIZONA VOCATIONAL EDUCATION DISTRICT (WAVE) A JOINT TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION DISTRICT

In 2007, the Arizona State Legislature amended legislation (ARS 15-391-396) that again allows two or more public school districts to join together and form a Joint Technological Education District (JTED). This document serves as our formal request to the Arizona State Board of Education to grant permission to the Mohave and La Paz County school districts listed below to proceed with the process necessary to secure voter approval for the formation of the Western Arizona Vocational Education district (WAVE).

The following school districts have received the approval of their respective governing boards to participate in the formation of a Joint Technological Education District in Mohave/La Paz Counties.

- Colorado River Union High School District
- Lake Havasu Unified School District
- Kingman Unified School District
- Parker Unified School District

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Prepared by the Mohave/La Paz
Joint Technological Education District Planning Committee

LEGISLATIVE FOUNDATION

In 1990, the Arizona State Legislature passed legislation allowing two or more districts to join together to form a joint technological school district. This legislation became Arizona Revised Statute 15-392. This Statute made it easier and more financially feasible to provide state-of-the-art classes for students within participating districts. Because of ARS 15-392, career and technical programs can be improved with little financial impact on taxpayers. The cost to taxpayers in member districts for this plan would be .05 cents per \$100 of secondary assessed valuation.

Previously, a moratorium was placed on the formation of Joint Technological Education Districts; however, this moratorium was lifted in 2007 legislation. As of 2006, there were 11 Joint Technological Education Districts (JTED) in the state. Pima County JTED is the most recently formed JTED in Arizona. In order to participate in a JTED, the voters must approve their district's becoming a part of a JTED through a general election. The goal is to have this issue placed on the November 2008 ballot. If formed, Mohave/La Paz County would be one of the last regions in Arizona to participate in a JTED.

THE NEED FOR A JTED IN MOHAVE AND LA PAZ COUNTIES

Rapidly evolving technologies have made new skills a requirement for success in everyday life. Successful businesses are seeking employees who can adapt to changing needs, juggle multiple responsibilities, and routinely make decisions on their own. Students will spend their lives in a multi-tasking, technology-driven diverse world and they must be equipped with the skills needed to do so. The formation of WAVE in Mohave and La Paz Counties is the key to meeting the educational challenges of our changing global economy.

Mohave and La Paz Counties are distinctive in location, climate and economic environment. To fully utilize the area's economic potential, high quality skill-centered education at the high school level is required. These counties, like other communities, face a critical challenge to keep pace in preparing students to meet the demands of tomorrow's workforce.

Currently, local school districts rely on state funding from the Arizona Department of Education, supplemented by various federal and state grants to fund Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. However, additional funding is essential to satisfy the rising workforce requirements of the region's vital and dynamic economic environment.

The goal of WAVE is to provide participating high school students with the opportunity to attain high-quality vocational and technical education while still in the public school system. The presence of sophisticated technological programs that respond to the changing knowledge and skill requirements of jobs and professions would reduce barriers to advanced training that currently exist in the local high schools. These highly skilled individuals would further fuel the dynamic growth of business and industry in Mohave and La Paz Counties and throughout the State.

DETERMINING THE NEED FOR A JTED

Early in the process it was determined that the expected outcome of programmatic collaboration would require discussion and consensus prior to the formal proposal for WAVE. The process of determining the need for a JTED in Mohave and La Paz Counties has been a collaborative effort. All stakeholders were invited to attend planning meetings. Participants represented interested Mohave and La Paz County school districts; Mohave Community College; and business, industry and community organizations. These sessions have been held monthly since November 2007.

THE PLAN

This proposal demonstrates that participating districts are acting on their commitment to Mohave and La Paz County students, parents, employers and taxpayers. The commitment promises to fuel a vital and dynamic educational entity dedicated to the technological future of the communities. The plan below outlines general characteristics of the proposed JTED for the two counties. Specifics of WAVE, including delivery systems and programmatic emphasis, would be the decision of the JTED governing board, which would not be in place until the voters have passed the initiative.

GOVERNANCE

If the electors approve the establishment of WAVE, a governing board would be appointed consistent with ARS 15-392 (D). The total area covered by the participating school districts would be divided into five districts of approximately equal population, and one individual from each district would be appointed to serve on the JTED governing board. Appointees could not be serving on the governing board of the participating school district. The terms of office for board members would become effective on January 1 following the election. The appointed members would serve on the governing board until January 1, 2011. Pursuant to ARS 15-393 (E), the JTED governing board would be required to hire a superintendent to act as their chief executive officer for the new district. The initial board would be responsible for conducting the affairs of the joint district until board members could be elected in the next general election, pursuant to ARS 15-393(B).

It would be the responsibility of the WAVE governing board to coordinate with existing governing boards of member districts to assure that the needs of all students within the JTED are properly accommodated. Should the governing board determine that additional facilities are required in order to offer appropriate services, the governing board would issue a call for a bond election, pursuant to ARS 15-491.

PROGRAMMATIC CHARACTERISTICS

The guiding educational philosophy of the proposed WAVE formation includes:

- Upgrading and enhancing existing courses and programs.
- Expanding the number and quality of courses available to students.
- Offering courses convenient for students.
- Training to enhance job skills and allow direct entry into the workforce and/or continued education.

The WAVE proposal, to be considered by the State Board, envisions a satellite model. A central facility is not being considered at this time. The CTE/vocational programs presently taught by participating districts in their own facility will be “satellited” to WAVE. This means that courses will continue to be taught at the school district facilities. However, under an intergovernmental agreement between WAVE and the participating school districts, WAVE may reimburse program costs without supplanting other CTE program funding. It is anticipated that between four and fourteen existing programs in participating district will fall under the terms of the agreement. Because of this arrangement, the home district will be relieved of the expense of improving and initiating the satellite programs, with little or no reduction in their own revenue.

Since WAVE will receive enhanced funding, it is feasible that the facilities and equipment will be improved and enhanced, thus upgrading the quality and number of programs offered. It is anticipated that the program enhancement process will begin the first year and continue in subsequent years of operation under this mode.

It is possible that WAVE will be able to offer additional courses in the participating districts, reflecting increased enrollment and funding. WAVE may provide support by providing and upgrading the equipment for the added courses, paying for the instructor and other costs associated with establishing new courses and programs. Capital costs of improving facilities may be a joint venture between WAVE and the home districts.

CONCLUSION

In closing, we respectfully request the approval of the Mohave/La Paz Joint Technological Education District/WAVE Plan by the Arizona State Board of Education. The act of approving this plan shall allow participating districts to call for this initiative to be placed on the ballot for the general election to be held in November of 2008.